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INDIANA JONES 3 OF 4

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INDIANA JONES™
AND THE IRON PHOENIX

LEE MARRS ✦ LEO DURAÑONA

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INDIANA JONES™
AND THE IRON PHOENIX

CHAPTER THREE

Joe Pinney, Hal Barwood,
Bill Stoneham, & Aric Wilmunder
of LucasArts Entertainment Company • story
Lee Marrs • comics adaptation script
Leo Durañona • art
Frank Lopez • colors
Dave Dorman • cover art

Teena Gores • publication design
Edward Martin III & Dan Thorsland • edits

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Bill Stoneham & Lucy Wilson, LucasArts
coherence coordination

Dr. Gerald D. Feldman
History of 20th-century Germany, UC-Berkeley
postwar Germany

Professor Elizabeth Siekhaus
Mills College, Oakland, CA
German language

Dr. Etienne Narsan
Tibetian customs

Stephanie Arlen
transcription

Mike Richardson • publisher
Neil Hankerson • executive vice president
David Scroggy • vice president of publishing
Lou Bank • vice president of sales & marketing
Andy Karabatsos • vice president of finance
Mark Anderson • general counsel
Diana Schutz • editor in chief
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SWWOOOSHH

<NO! WAIT! I COME INNN PEACE->

WHANNNG!

<THISSS IS *IDIOTIC*... SSSOME *ILLUSION*...>

WHUNK!

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AH! O.K., NOT AN ILLUSION!

SWIK

SSWIK!

ALLEY...

...OOOP!

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WHUMP! THACK!

KACHING!

JONES, YOU'RE IN *DEEP* HERE.

SOME SORT OF MAZE? WHERE COULD THE STONE...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL I'M DOING...

AH! SOME AIR... CLEAR MY HEAD.

WOOOSHH!

YAA!

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UH-OH...

...THE *STONE.* DAMN.

SOMEONE... AND...

HMM. MAYBE THE PRIEST IS ALREADY DEAD.

UHH. NO, STILL WITH US.

CAN'T LET THOSE NAZIS GET THE THIRD PIECE... TOO MUCH AT STAKE. ***THESE*** COULD BE ILLUSIONS. DAMN IT ALL.

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I'LL GO BACK FOR THE...

...STONE. UNH!

WHUMPP!

<BROTHER, ARE YOU WELL? I MUST GO BACK, IF YOU-->

WHA?!! PRIEST! GONE?

THE OUROBOROS ...

MY HEAD IS CLEARING... STEPS?

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I HAVE YET TO MEET A ***SHALLOW*** CANYON...

CRACK

EEAA!!

SO MUCH FOR ***SPEEDY BRAVADO.***

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ARE THOSE MY FINGERS OR FROZEN HOT DOGS?

CRREEEEE

<WELCOME, REFORMER.>

<PLEASE, COME SIT.>

<SURELY. BUT I'VE HAD ENOUGH TEA, THANK YOU.>

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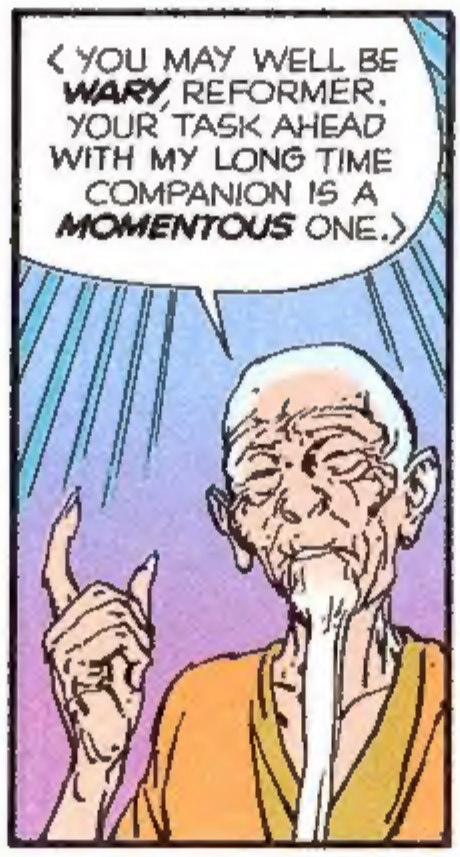
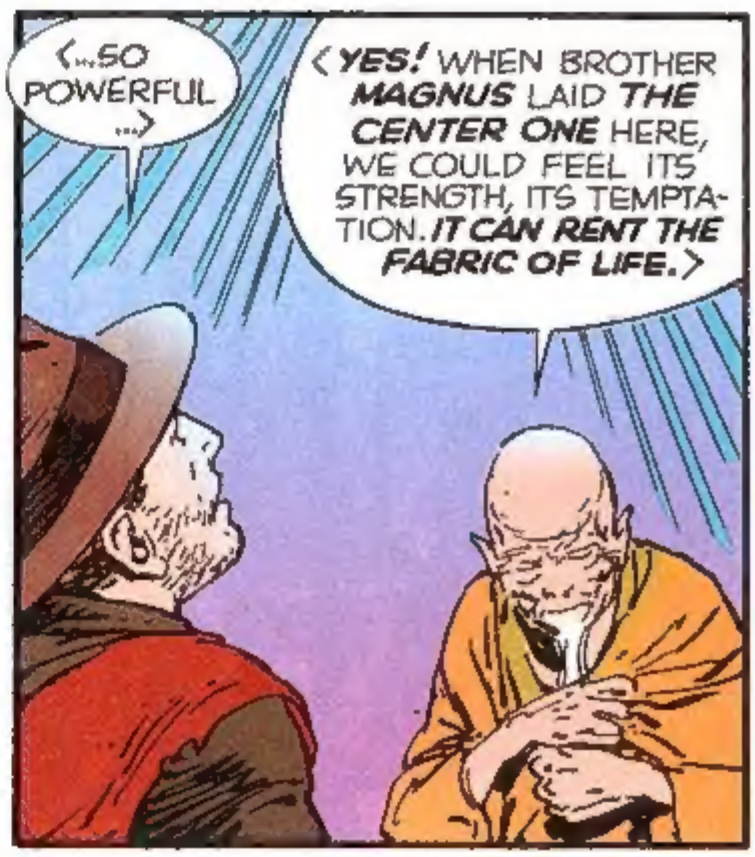
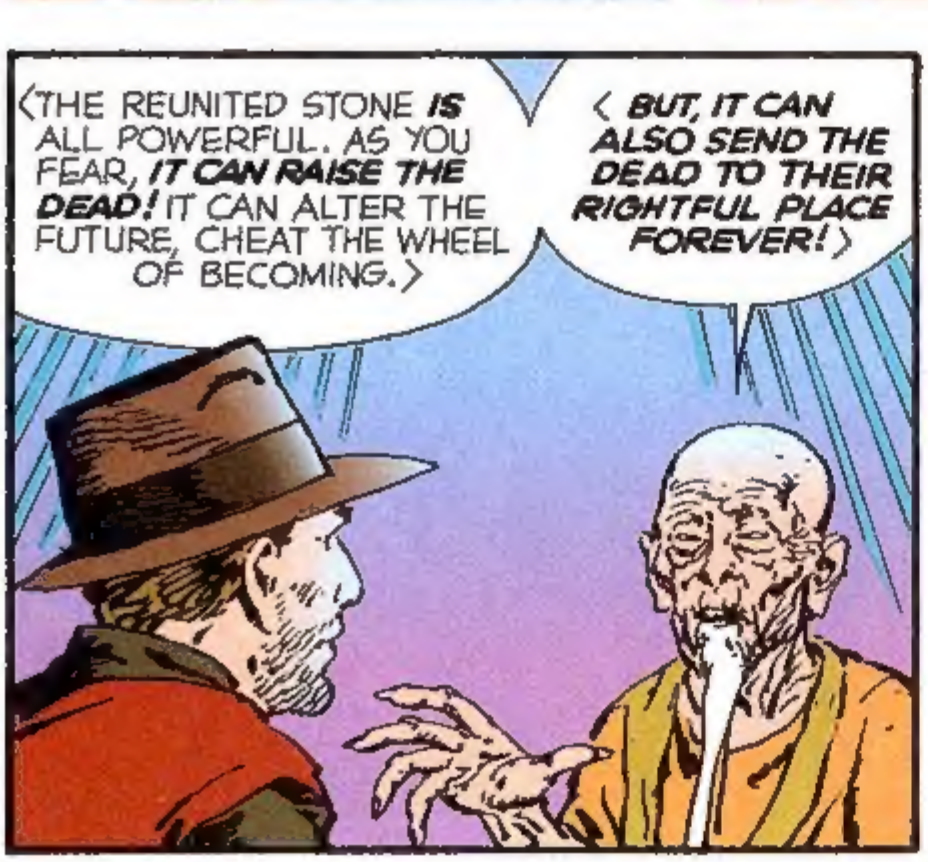
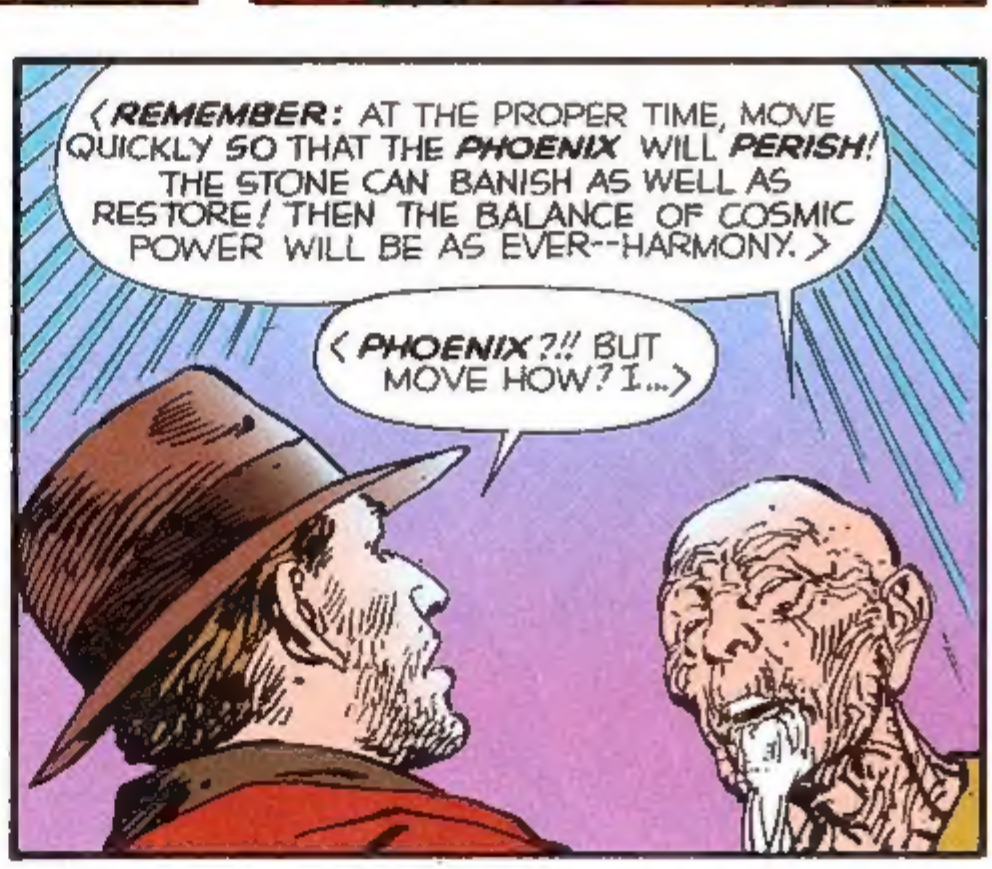



〈...SO POWERFUL ...〉
〈*YES!* WHEN BROTHER *MAGNUS* LAID *THE CENTER ONE* HERE, WE COULD FEEL ITS STRENGTH, ITS TEMPTATION. *IT CAN RENT THE FABRIC OF LIFE.*〉


〈THE REUNITED STONE *IS* ALL POWERFUL. AS YOU FEAR, *IT CAN RAISE THE DEAD!* IT CAN ALTER THE FUTURE, CHEAT THE WHEEL OF BECOMING.〉
〈 *BUT, IT CAN ALSO SEND THE DEAD TO THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE FOREVER!*〉


〈*REMEMBER:* AT THE PROPER TIME, MOVE QUICKLY SO THAT THE *PHOENIX* WILL *PERISH!* THE STONE CAN BANISH AS WELL AS RESTORE! THEN THE BALANCE OF COSMIC POWER WILL BE AS EVER--HARMONY.〉
〈*PHOENIX*?!! BUT MOVE HOW? I...〉

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<NO / PRIEST, WAIT-->

<I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS!!>

SIGH.., REFORMER, HUH? I THINK I COULD'VE USED SOME ADVICE HERE.

HEY! WHA...

HMM... I HATE IT WHEN THIS HAPPENS.

ALWAYS THE CRYPTIC REMARK... AFTER A FEW CENTURIES, YOU'D THINK HE COULD SPARE TEN MINUTES... AND HOW THE HELL AM I--

WWHUHH!

WHUH!

AHH!

THERE, THERE. NICE YAK. GOOD BOY...

LET'S SEE. MY NOTES SHOW A LARGE BOULDER... RIGHT! WE'RE RIGHT ON COURSE. MAYBE MR. HORNS HERE KNOWS THE WAY HOME.

MONTHS LATER. **BERLIN.** AMERICAN ZONE.

GOOD THING THAT CUSTOMS SEES THESE AS JUST "ROCKS." I FEEL LIKE I'M CARRYING A TICKING TIME BOMB.

I SURELY CAN'T TRUST ANY **GOVERNMENT** TO BE RESPONSIBLE... HIROSHIMA **MAY** HAVE BEEN NECESSARY...NO.

SINCE MAGNUS **STARTED** THE PROCESS **HERE,** THERE MAY BE SOME **SAFETY ZONE** IN HIS TOWER THAT COULD NEUTRALIZE ITS POWER...HMM...

MARCUS, OLD MAN— BACK WITH **THE COMPLETE GOODS,** AS I WIRED YOU! I'VE BEEN **DREAMING** OF YOUR STUNNING **JAVA** FOR...

...WEEKS.

ROOWOU! RUZWAAHZ!

<WELL, MARCUS. MAYBE YOU SHOULD BREW UP A WHOLE **POT.** EVENING, COMRADE MAJOR LEGS.>

<**MISHA...**>

CAREFUL! MAJOR, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE THERE! THESE AREN'T JUST VALUABLE **ARTIFACTS, BELIEVE ME,** THE POSSIBLE...

HA! **BELIEVE** YOU?!! DO NOT BE ABSURD! YOU HAVE **DECEIVED** US AT EVERY JUNCTURE. BUT WE HAVE BEEN MONITORING YOUR FRIEND'S CONTACTS, AND **SO CAN WELCOME YOUR DEFIANT RETURN, ARROGANT LIAR.**

ARROGANT?!! LOOK, YOU--

DR. **JONES**, SINCE YOUR CONCERN FOR THESE ITEMS' SAFETY **IS** PROBABLY **GENUINE**, HOWEVER DEVIOUS YOUR METHODS, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THEY WILL BE PROTECTED... AND **TREASURED.**

AS YOU WELL KNOW, TOO MUCH OF VALUE, **REAL** VALUE HAS BEEN DESTROYED IN THESE LAST YEARS. WHATEVER CAN BE FOUND TO REMIND US OF SANITY, BEAUTY, **DESERVES** PROTECTION.

DR. **JONES**--THAT SCUM, **JÄGER**, WANTS THESE TREASURES AND **I** WANT **HIM!** THESE ARE EXCELLENT BAIT FOR THE DESPICABLE MONSTER.

SINCE YOU HAVE--HOWEVER UNWILLINGLY--**AIDED** US IN THIS MISSION, IT IS WITH REGRET THAT I MUST **EXECUTE** YOU, DR. **JONES.**

WHAT! DON'T BE ABS--

<**MISHA**, CLEAR OUT AND I'LL JOIN YOU. RADIO SECURITY CENTRAL.>

MY SUPERIORS, IN VIEW OF **YOUR TRESPASSING SOVIET TERRITORY AND DESTRUCTION OF SOVIET PROPERTY**, HAVE ORDERED YOUR **ELIMINATION.**

WHUFF MUHWA!

BLAMM

NADIA! NO!

UH... **HUH?!**

UH.

I AM A DEAD SHOT, SHOOTING.

OOoooH.

I ***DO*** ADMIRE YOUR COURAGE AND INGENUITY, DR. JONES. I'LL HAVE MY JAGER BECAUSE OF YOU.

NOW YOU ***MUST*** FOLLOW MY ORDERS. ***PLAY DEAD!*** OR SURELY ***I*** WILL BE RUINED AND YOU ***WILL BE EXECUTED.*** LEAVE ***BERLIN*** QUICKLY AND ***QUIETLY.***

MUST BE THE OL' CHARM...

MOMENTS LATER.

WHA?!! OOH, SORRY.

HMM. WELL, IF I CAN'T INFILTRATE SECURITY CENTRAL, MARCUS, ***YOU'LL*** HAVE TO DISGUISE YOURSELF AS AN... ***INSPECTOR!***

I NEED A STIFF SHERRY...

WE CAN'T LET THIS ONE GO, MARCUS. I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU THE--

BLAM! BLAM! RATATAT!!

<PLEASE... DON'T LEAVE ME...>

<GO! GO!>

RATATATTAT!!

RROOOM!

<MISHA! NOO... YOU BASTARDS...>

VAAAAAROOOM

RRUUMBURUUM

SCREEK

WHERE...? AH! ON THE TRAIL!

IT'S A MASSACRE...

HE'S GONE, INDY.

< HUH! PLEASE...>

< KOFF KOFF! DAMN DUNKEL VOLK! DESERTING... KOFF! SLIMY RAT... >

<RIGHT. HE DESERVES TO BE HANGED! AND I'LL DO IT-- BUT YOU MUST TELL ME WHERE HE'S GOING! YES? >

<GOING... YES.>

< BAHNHOF AM ZOO... UH... 11.00 NIGHT TRAIN-->

MUCH LATER.

THE ARMY'S FINALLY LEAVING--THEY'VE PACKED UP THE LAST BODIES--POOR DEVILS. I FEEL THE COWARD FOR CALLING IN *ANONYMOUSLY*, INDY.

DON'T. BUREAUCRACY... EVEN IF THEY *CAUGHT DUNKELVOLK*, THE SCROLL AND THE STONE MIGHT END UP WITH THE RUSSIANS--AND THEN TO *JÄGER*, WHO KNOWS? CAN'T RISK IT.

I'M *SURE* WE CAN TRUST *COMRADE MAJOR KIROV* TO TRACK DOWN DUNKELVOLK, THE STONE--*AND JÄGER!*

WELL, YES. THAT'S ONE DETERMINED AND CLEVER... SOLDIER. BUT, REMEMBER THE STONE'S *POWERS*. THE MAJOR COULD BE IN *MORE* DANGER IF SHE *GETS* THE STONE!

WELL, SINCE SHE'S IN *UTTER PERIL*...

RIGHTO, *BUDDY*. ONE FOR THE ROAD--UH, *RAILS*.

LATER THAT NIGHT. BAHNHOF AM ZOO.

<WHAT ABOUT ALL THOSE?!! I CAN'T->

<-*DON'T TOUCH THEM!* *OUR* PEOPLE WILL LOAD UP AS SOON AS THE LAST ARRIVE.>

<THIS IS A REGULARLY SCHEDULED TRAIN.>

<YES. BUT DUNKELVOLK HAS ARRANGED *SEALED CARS* FOR US. WE WILL BE SEPARATE, BEHIND THE REST OF THE TRAIN.>

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ALL *THIS*? ARE THEY BUILDING A TOWN? WHERE... *KOBLENZ*. HMM.

HEY! NOT SCREWED DOWN... HINGES?

CREEE...

OH, FOR THAT IRISH CROWBAR.

A RADIO?

< HEAR A CREAK? >

HUH? FRAU *NADIA* FRIEDRICH? WELL, WELL...

< DIETER, YOU'RE AN OLD WOMAN. *EVERYTHING* HERE CREAKS - IT'S A *TRAIN TERMINAL*! >

I'LL JUST PROP OPEN THE TOP A LITTLE UNTIL I CAN --

CLICK

DAMN! I'LL JUST CARVE A FEW AIR HOLES WHILE I'M WAITING...

RIGHT ON SCHEDULE.

ONE OF MANY CHECKPOINTS.

DAWN.

<THERE IT IS.>

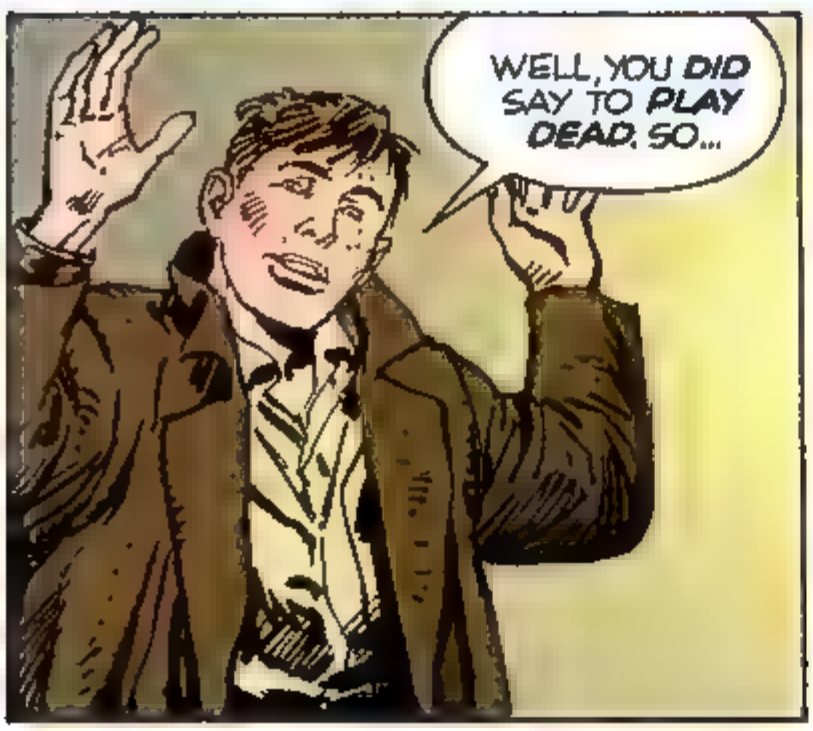
<GERMANS ARE SUCH FOOLS FOR SENTIMENT! "THE POOR WIDOW IS COMPLETELY WELCOME TO COMMUNE WITH HER POOR HUSBAND'S REMAINS."> <WAIT... THE LOCK'S BEEN→

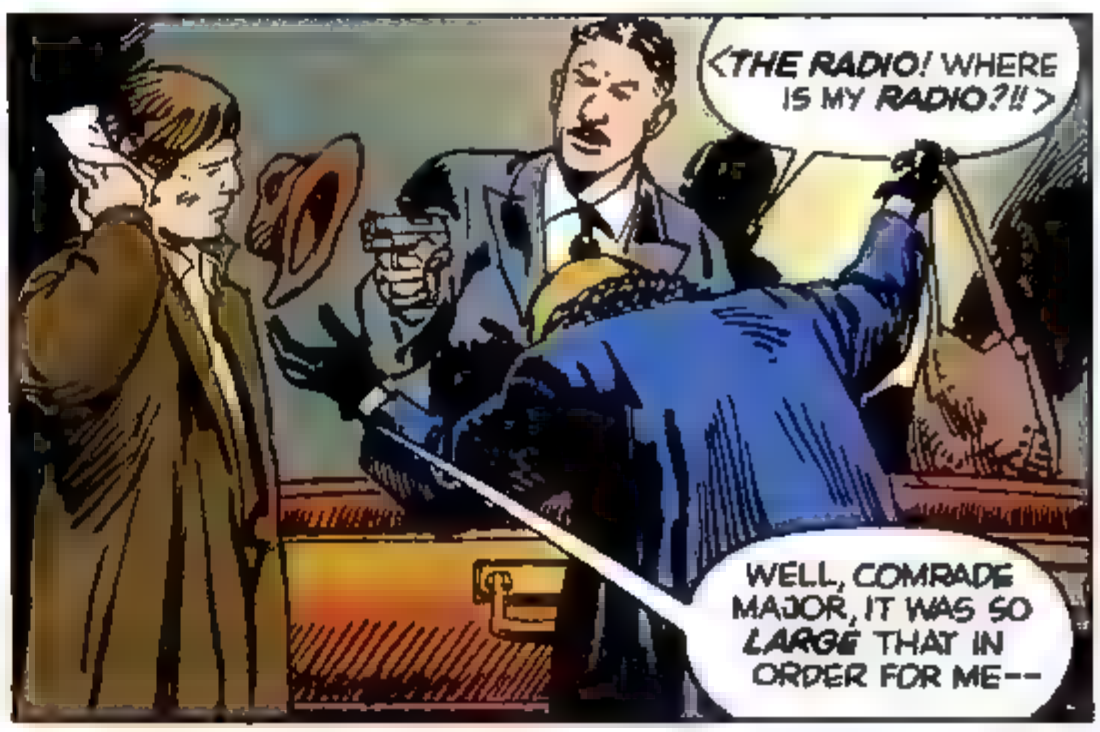
CLICK!

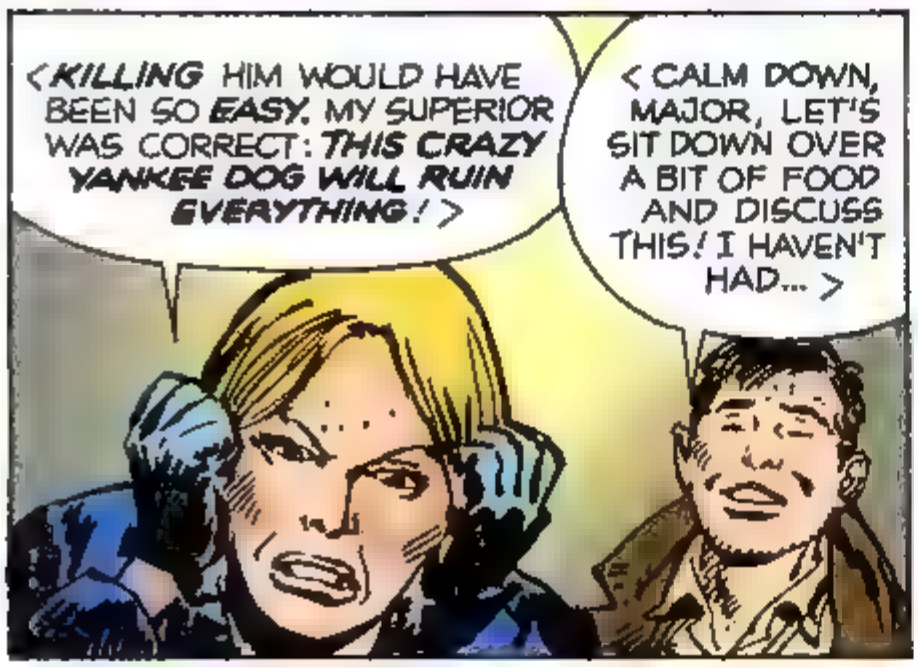
WHACK!

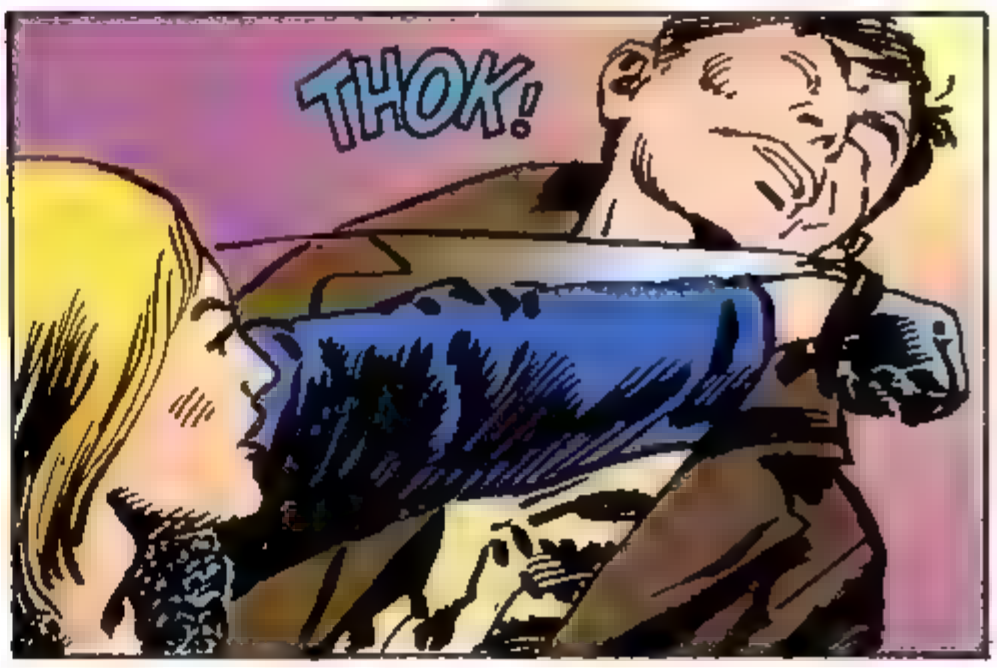
< UKK! YOU BASTARD! YOU-->
NADIA?!!

< JONES?!! NO! IT CAN'T BE!!>


WELL, YOU DID SAY TO PLAY DEAD. SO...


<THE RADIO! WHERE IS MY RADIO?!!>
WELL, COMRADE MAJOR, IT WAS SO LARGE THAT IN ORDER FOR ME--


< KILLING HIM WOULD HAVE BEEN SO EASY. MY SUPERIOR WAS CORRECT: THIS CRAZY YANKEE DOG WILL RUIN EVERYTHING! >
< CALM DOWN, MAJOR, LET'S SIT DOWN OVER A BIT OF FOOD AND DISCUSS THIS! I HAVEN'T HAD... >


THOK!

THAT NIGHT.

NO. NO. NO. I CANNOT LET YOU ROAM FREE. YOU WOULD BE RECOGNIZED ON THIS TRAIN BY DUNKELVOLK. I DO NOT TRUST MY DISGUISE FULLY, BUT STAY IN MY COMPARTMENT AND HAVE MEALS DELIVERED.

WELL, I HAD WONDERED WHAT YOU'D LOOK LIKE OUT OF UNIFORM, BUT... THIS?

O.K., O.K. SO, WHEN YOU AND MR. TANK HERE TRACE JÄGER THROUGH DUNKELVOLK, YOU WERE TO RADIO FOR... TROOPS? POLICE? WHAT'S THE CHARGE?

POSSESSION OF STOLEN GOODS! THE SCROLL WAS ENTERED INTO OUR SECURITY RECORDS THE NIGHT WE FIRST CAUGHT YOU IN BERLIN.

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS -- SO CLOSE! JÄGER WILL NOT ESCAPE THIS TIME. THE TRAIL HAD LONG AGO GROWN COLD THEN HIS LACKEY DUNKELVOLK SURFACED AS A PRIME SUSPECT IN THE ATTEMPTED THEFT OF HITLER'S ASHES! WE--

ASHES? MAJOR, I MUST TELL YOU SOME FACTS ABOUT THOSE... GOODS. IF JÄGER POSSESSES THEM FOR ONLY A FEW HOURS, IT COULD BE DISASTROUS! IN THE SCROLL'S MARGINS...

MUCH LATER.

DR. JONES, YOU ARE AN EXPERIENCED SCHOLAR. IN MY WORK REGARDING TREASURES, YOUR NAME HAS APPEARED MANY TIMES WITH MUCH RESPECT.

BUT I CANNOT BELIEVE THESE TALES OF MAGICAL POWERS! SUCH THINGS... RIDICULOUS. THE... PRESSURE OF OBTAINING THE STONE'S PARTS COULD--

I FELT JUST AS YOU-- ONCE, BUT MY WORK HAS LED ME DOWN DARK PATHS WHERE ANCIENT FORCES ACT--FORCES BEYOND ACCEPTED BELIEFS! TRUST ME, MAJOR. I--

< SERGEANT! WE'RE LOCKING HIM IN AGAIN.>

HEY!!

LET ME OUT! YOU NEED MY HELP! MAJOR--

QUIET! YOU'LL RUIN US ALL. I'LL LET YOU OUT AS WE NEAR KOBLENZ. YOU CAN ALERT THE AUTHORITIES WHILE WE FOLLOW DUNKELVOLK. FOR NOW-- SILENCE!

THUMP! THUMP!

FORTUNATELY, I PALMED A LIL' OL' DINNER FORK.

CLINK CLINK CLINK

DAMN. I'VE *GOT* TO SEE WHAT *DUNKELVOLK* IS DELIVERING TO *JÄGER*. THEY MIGHT EVEN HIDE THE STONES THERE TO AVOID CHECKPOINT SEARCHES...

< YOU *AND* LAZLO CHECK WITH THE GUARDS. I'M GOING TO LATE SUPPER SEATING, THEN RETURNING TO THE CABIN. >

< IT MAY TAKE A WHILE TO CHECK THE BOXES. >

< FINE. >

MY MIND CAN'T STOP WHIRLING-- WHAT IF JONES IS CORRECT? *IF I TOOK ONE OF THE THREE STONE PARTS, NOTHING COULD BE DONE.*

<CLOSE THE CURTAINS. BRING DOWN MY SUITCASE.>

<COMRADE MAJOR, I MUST REGISTER MY PROTEST AGAIN.>

< YOU ARE TOO BIG FOR THIS. NOW GO STAND BY THEIR PLATFORM DOOR.>

THE TRAIN IS SPEEDING UP.

DUNKELVOLK COULD ASSUME *ONE OF HIS OWN* TOOK THE *CENTERPIECE. JONES* DESCRIBED IT AS *LOOKING* VALUABLE...

...THIRD COMPARTMENT... THE TRAIN IS SPEEDING UP?

AH ... THANK YOU, BRAKEMAN.

... FOURTH COMPARTMENT. UGH. WHAT PIGS.

HO! *MACHINE GUNS!* OF... BRAZILIAN MAKE?

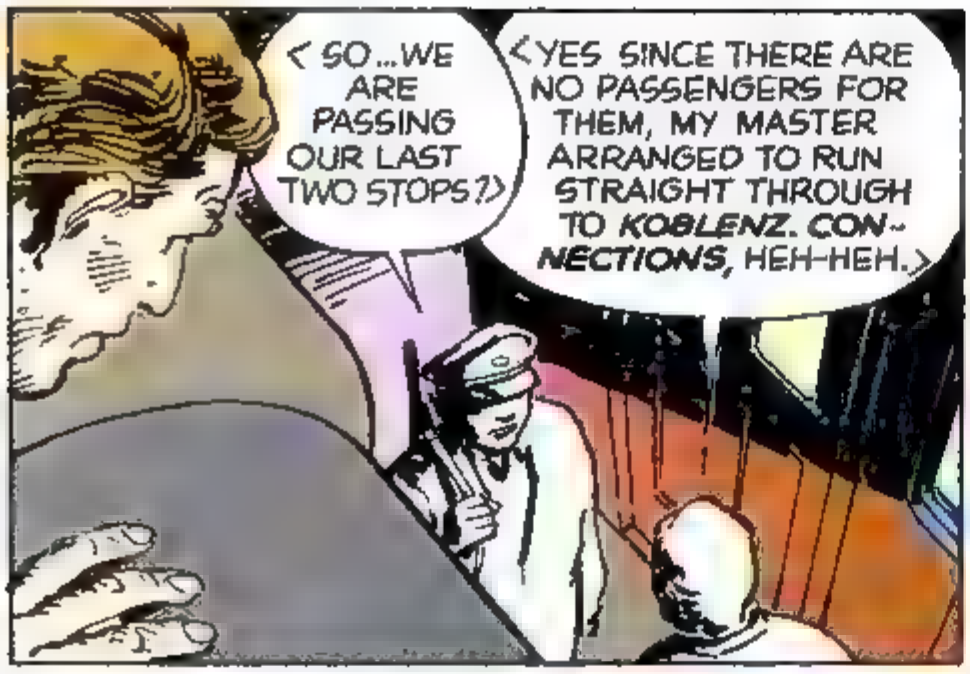
YES! HERE'S MISHA'S *BAG!*

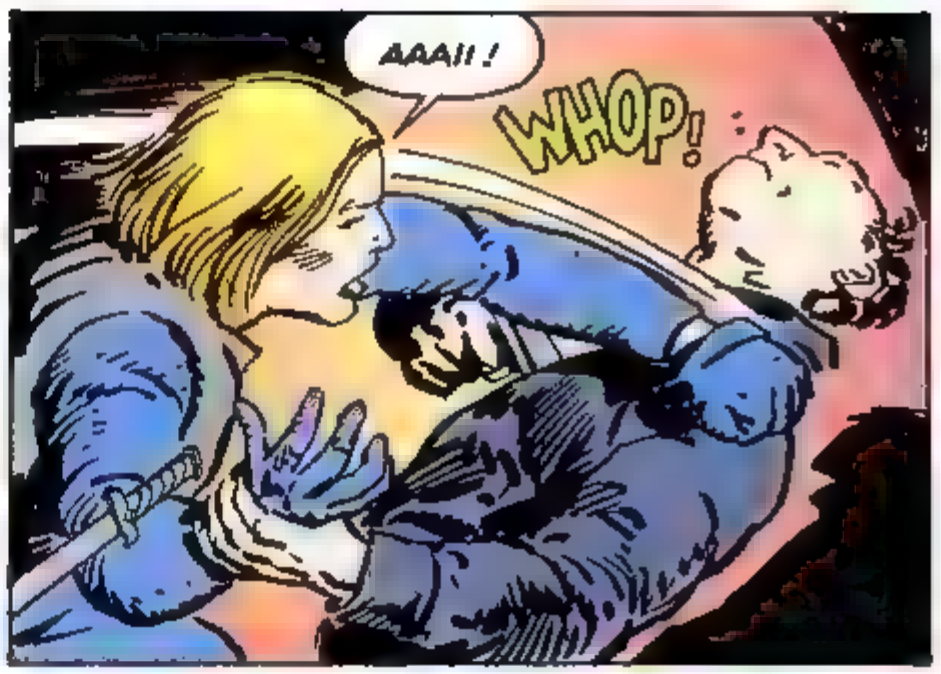
HOWITZER! JÄGER PLANS SOMETHING *BIG.* WHAT LEVELS OF BRIBERY HAVE *THIS* ROLLING THROUGH THE AMERICAN ZONE?

<*HALT! THIEF!*>

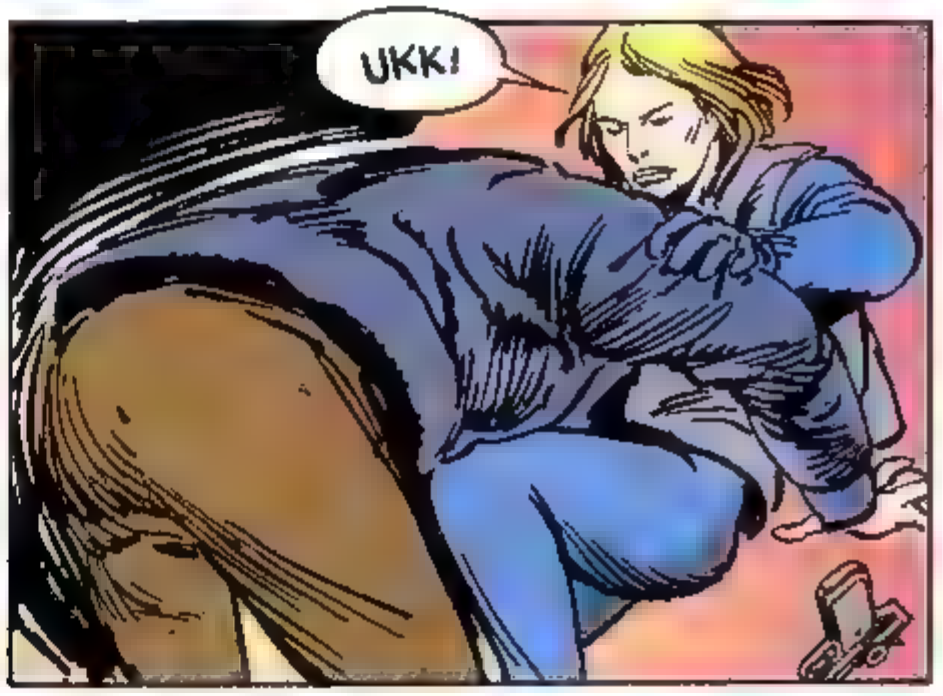
LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING TO HAVE TO STEAL BACK THE STONE *NOW.* MAJOR LEGS WILL HAVE TO NAIL *JÄGER* ON -- OOO

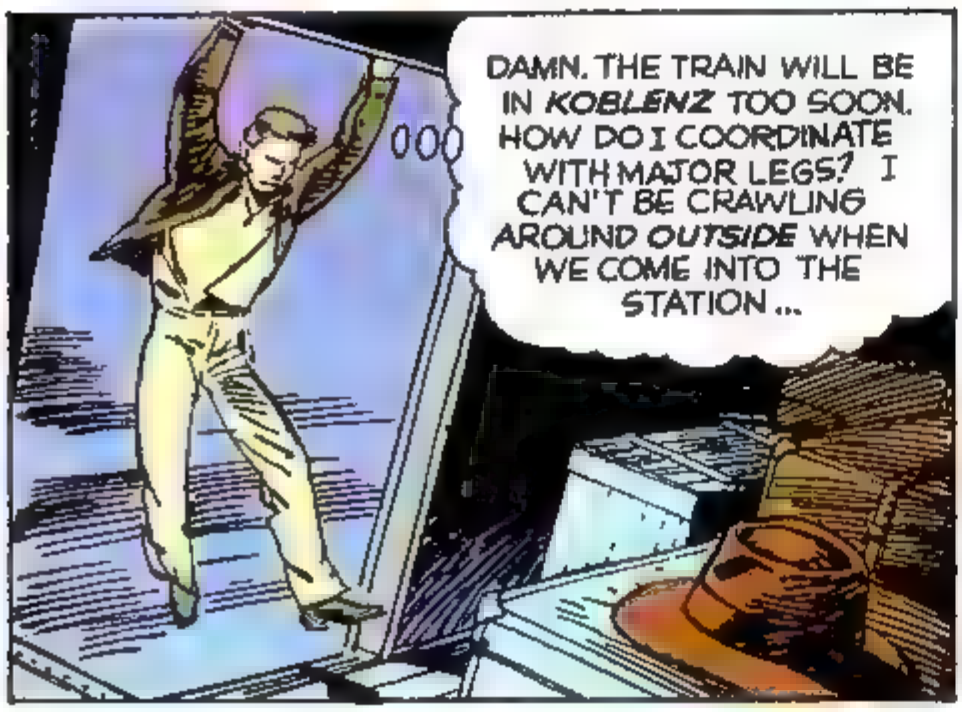
WHAP!


< SO...WE ARE PASSING OUR LAST TWO STOPS?>
<YES SINCE THERE ARE NO PASSENGERS FOR THEM, MY MASTER ARRANGED TO RUN STRAIGHT THROUGH TO KOBLENZ. CONNECTIONS, HEH-HEH.>


AAAII!
WHOP!

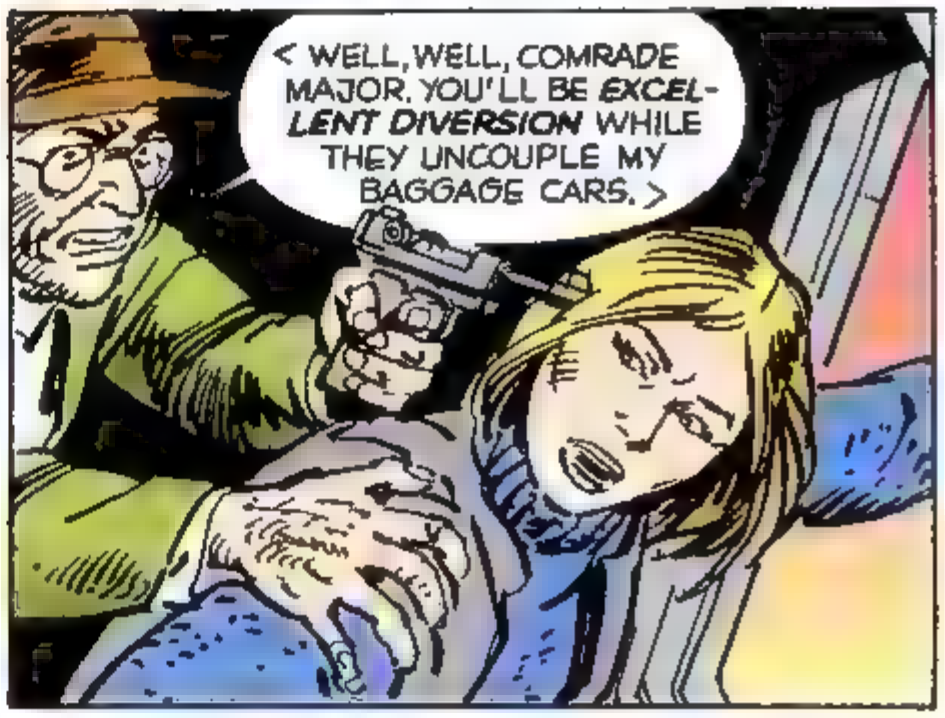
< SEE YOU AROUND.>


UKK!


DAMN. THE TRAIN WILL BE IN KOBLENZ TOO SOON. HOW DO I COORDINATE WITH MAJOR LEGS? I CAN'T BE CRAWLING AROUND OUTSIDE WHEN WE COME INTO THE STATION...

KOFF! KOFF!

OK. STATION IS ON THE LEFT. I'LL JUST HAVE TO MOVE FAST...


< WELL, WELL, COMRADE MAJOR. YOU'LL BE EXCELLENT DIVERSION WHILE THEY UNCOUPLE MY BAGGAGE CARS. >

ALMOST DAWN. KOBLENZ.

<I KNOW WE ARE EARLY. YOU STILL SHOULD HAVE HAD ALL THE TRUCKS READY, DIETER.>

NADIA!!

THE BASTARDS.

<I EXPECT TO SEE THAT SHIPMENT IMMEDIATELY!>

<YES, SIR. RIGHT, SIR.>

I LOVE POETIC JUSTICE...

SNIK!

<I'M FOR A COFFEE.>

<THAT DUNKEL-VOLK--THINKS HE'S A BIG CHEESE!>

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RRRROOM M!!

THERE GO JÄGER'S MUNITIONS...

KKADFOOOM!!

<GOD IN HEAVEN!>

BAABOOM!!

WHOOM!!

...DONE IN BY JÄGER'S MUNITIONS.

<YOU COMMIE SABOTEUR! YOU WILL ANSWER TO JÄGER FOR THIS-- CENTIMETER BY CENTIMETER!>

TO BE CONCLUDED

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Saving the world this April.

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FINISH LINE

People who work in comics get used to the astonished responses they receive when they reveal what they do for a living. "Comics?" people ask. This is especially true for me as Dark Horse's proofreader because people can't fathom that 1) I get paid for, literally, reading comic books all day, and 2) that comic books need proofreading at all. "What's the point? They're comic books!" or "Gee, tough job," are the usual responses.

The point, of course (for anyone who has anything to do with language and communication), is that to be effective, i.e., understandable, communication of any form needs to be very clear and concise. The originator's/author's meaning needs to be clearly understood. Obviously, muddled misusage of the English language greatly affects this goal.

But proofreading is about more than just commas, misspelled words, and so on. Proofreading comic books is about knowing as much as is possible about a variety of subjects. How many feet are in a yard? What was Beatrix Potter's real name? What does the Albanian flag look like? Who wrote *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*? How *do* you spell the sound effect *skreeeeeee*?

Proofreading is also about noticing confusing balloon placements, character name changes, Canadian price exchange rates, costume changes, misplaced or missing tattoos, floating eyeglasses, backward swastikas, three-legged dogs (except Concrete's), pianos missing black keys, and a plethora of other items. It basically means paying attention to details, details, details.

What's the point? Well, it all comes back to clear communication. When all or some of the above potential errors exist in a book, they take away from the writer's meaning — they cloud the intended vision or purpose. Unfortunately, to many people these things are not noticeable or important. (That says something for the "acceptable" decline of our language.) But, believe it or not, there are people who care about the quality of their comics.

As one of the few people who (hopefully) gets the opportunity to read all of Dark Horse's comics before they go to press, it is my job to care about the quality of Dark Horse's comics. It's my job to notice things.

Do I get paid for reading comics all day? Yes, but it isn't as easy or as fun as it seems; however, at least most of what I read is in some way entertaining. But it's not like I get to pick and choose what comics *I* read (we don't even publish any Felix the Cat comics). I have to read *all* of them carefully. It's not like I sit around with my feet on my desk leisurely reading the books. With a boss like Diana, who really knows the English language, I've got to keep on my toes and concentrate on what's in front of me.

Proofreading comics is a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it, and it might as well be me!

It's all about proofreading.
Suzanne Taylor

FEB. CHECKLIST

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 7

- ❑ HERMES VERSUS THE EYEBALL KID #3
- ❑ JAMES BOND 007: THE QUASIMODO GAMBIT #1
- ❑ REBEL SWORD #5
- ❑ X #11

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 14

- ❑ CLASSIC STAR WARS: THE EARLY ADVENTURES #7
- ❑ DARK HORSE INSIDER #39
- ❑ DARK HORSE PRESENTS #94
- ❑ INDIANA JONES AND THE IRON PHOENIX #3
- ❑ INSTANT PIANO #3
- ❑ JOHN BYRNE'S NEXT MEN, VOLUME 4: FAITH (TRADE PAPERBACK COLLECTION)
- ❑ STAR WARS: TALES OF THE JEDI — DARK LORDS OF THE SITH, BOOK 1 #5

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 21

- ❑ ALIENS: BERSERKER #2
- ❑ GIVE ME LIBERTY (LIMITED-EDITION HARDCOVER)
- ❑ GRENDEL TALES: HOMECOMING #3
- ❑ SIN CITY: THE BIG FAT KILL #4
- ❑ STAR WARS: DARK EMPIRE II #3
- ❑ TRIPLE-X #3

SHIPPING FEBRUARY 28

- ❑ ALIENS/PREDATOR: THE DEADLIEST OF THE SPECIES #10
- ❑ BARB WIRE #9
- ❑ EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS' TARZAN: THE LOST ADVENTURE #2
- ❑ THE JAM: URBAN ADVENTURE #8
- ❑ THE MACHINE #4
- ❑ THE MASK #1
- ❑ THE MASK (LIMITED-EDITION HARDCOVER SET)
- ❑ OH MY GODDESS! PART 2 #1
- ❑ TANK GIRL 2 (TRADE PAPERBACK COLLECTION)

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